

Farmers from across the state will gather at the Tennessee State University Agricultural, Research and Extension Demonstration Farm on Oct. 17 to hear about innovative ways to market their produce, as well as add value to their crops and extend this year's growing season.

"The purpose of the field day is to provide farmers with the latest information about fall vegetable crop production, innovative marketing and agritourism," said Chris Robbins, farm agent for the TSU Farm, located at 3103 River Road in Cheatham County.

We will discuss vegetable varieties, how to extend the season later into the fall and begin production earlier in the spring, using techniques such as: high tunnel production, plastic culture, drip irrigation, row covers, hot bed production and variety selection.

The farmers will have the opportunity to meet and talk with representatives from various agencies and organizations to include: Annette Wszelaki, vegetable Extension specialist with University of Tennessee Extension, who will discuss fall vegetable varieties and season extension; Megan Bruch, marketing specialist with the Center for Profitable Agriculture, who will talk about profitable agritourism and value-added vegetable marketing; Tiffany Mullins, assistant director of Commodities with the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation, who will discuss Tennessee Farm Fresh, a new program designed to help farmers advertise and disseminate information about the availability of their products to consumers; and John Frady with the state Department of Agriculture, who will discuss producer diversification and funding sources available to small farmers.

Robbins will discuss the do's and don'ts of marketing products at farmer's markets and roadside stands.

Registration for the field day will begin at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will be provided for participants at 11:45 a.m.

Anyone interested in attending Friday's field day should preregister by Oct. 10. To register for this event, please contact Elisha Holt at 615-963-5016. For more information, please contact Robbins at 615-566-6460.